

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS — HUAWEI

540. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Premier:

I ask a supplementary question. In light of the new security risks identified by the US government, and decisions of our own commonwealth government in relation to Huawei, why is the Premier stubbornly refusing to accept that this contract needs revisiting?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

US government security threats—if that is the theme, let us talk about the real threat. I refer to the tax bill to the US government of hundreds of thousands of dollars. I do not even know how much it is. How much is it, Leader of the Opposition? How much is his tax bill to a foreign power? How much is that?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member for Scarborough asked me about US government security threats. It is very relevant in my view.

As I confirmed to the house, members opposite seem to have something against Western Australia's relationship with China. That seems to be the theme that they are pursuing—this seems to be a national theme of the Liberals and Nationals—that somehow the Western Australian government should not have a relationship with China. I just remind all members opposite that China is our biggest trading partner. We have \$60 billion worth of trade from Western Australia to China, and China sells us \$4 billion. It is an important relationship. I would have thought that should be something members opposite are aware of. The second point is that the contract was decided by the Public Transport Authority based upon its own tendering guidelines.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: At least they have got a bit of life back after the glumness we have seen in the last two days, but the bit of life they have got back is rather embarrassing.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I am enlightened once again by the Minister for Tourism. The member for Bateman did take his business partner to a private dinner with the Chinese Consul. He took his business partner to promote their business interests with the Chinese Consul. Remember that?

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: He does remember? Good. At least he can tell the truth. He confirmed it.

The PTA made a decision. We got advice from the commonwealth government, from the Department of Home Affairs and the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, that there were no security issues involved. Had we interfered in a contractual process when we got that advice and made a different decision, members opposite would have marched in here demanding and saying we have done the wrong thing. That is what they would have done. They would have marched in here saying we have done the wrong thing. So, whatever we do, with this opposition, we cannot win.

The SPEAKER: Before we go onto the next question, I would like to welcome Hon Eric Ripper in the Speaker's gallery today.

Mr M.P. Murray: The greatest Treasurer ever!

The SPEAKER: I would not call you the greatest sports minister ever, but I call you to order for the first time.